

The Musical World.

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A RECORD OF MUSIC, THE DRAMA, LITERATURE, FINE ARTS, FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE, &c.

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STEPHEN HELLER.

THE papers on the genius and compositions of this accomplished and admirable musician have been unavoidably laid aside, to make room for the Italian Opera notices and other matters of more immediate if not of greater interest. In answer, however, to numerous inquiries that have reached us, we beg leave to assure our readers that it is our intention to continue them immediately. A paper is already in type, in which the *Art de Phraser* and other works of M. Stephen Heller are elaborately investigated. This will positively appear in our next.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

AT each of the three performances since our last Mr. Lumley has presented a novelty to his subscribers and the public. This is good management, and can hardly fail to produce successful results.

On Saturday *Medea* was repeated. We have little to add to our criticism of the opening night. Parodi's improvement was confirmed, which proved that her performance on Tuesday week was not one of those chance inspirations that sometimes happen to mediocre artists. All the fine points we noticed in our last were again prominent, besides a more general excellence. The trying scene of the invocation did not, on this occasion, exceed the physical force of Mlle. Parodi. But we think it a pity that, in the last scene, she has to sing so far away from the audience, where, had she twice the power of voice, she could scarcely make herself heard with effect. Moreover, we object to the dragon upon whose sides *Medea* is borne into the clouds. It is un-classical, mythythological, un-everything that it ought to be. Ask the learned editor of the *Opera Box*, who will tell you that *Medea* makes her escape in a chariot given her by the sun—drawn, no doubt, by hypogriffs.

Madame Giuliani was in better voice, and sang better than on the first night. Belletti was careful, correct, and efficient, as usual, and Signor Micheli did his best to acquire importance in the music of Giasone. Signor Micheli, however, is too little a man for so great a hero (though Jason, by the way, was a very equivocal hero according to the modern acceptation of the word), and his action is too pompous and redundant for his stature. This comes, as we have already said, from his French education. Duprez himself, the king of his school, was eminently given to superfluous gestures. Signor Micheli has been soundly pumelled by all the papers; but we think the powder and shot of our valiant contemporaries of the fiery pens might have aimed at a higher mark. Signor Micheli was scarcely worth so many hard knocks, in the shape of words.

Medea, as we have said before, can never regain its popularity. Its day is dead. Nevertheless, we are glad to have seen Madlle. Parodi in the part, which has been to her a source of great success.

Les Metamorphoses has confirmed our first impressions. Carlotta Grisi never achieved a greater triumph, and M. Pau Taglioni never succeeded so well in carrying out a happy idea. *Les Metamorphoses* is a little faery drama of an interest quite human. True, no other than Carlotta Grisi could have embodied the imaginary sprite with such a happy mixture of reality and ethereality (real-reality and ether-reality). In her hands—or, shall we say, in her feet—the many-figured sprite is on ne peut plus fascinating and irresistible. That Carlotta was a perfect actress, as well as a dancer wholly without a rival, we have all along known and said; but that her pantomime was so plastic—so capable of infinite metamorphoses, or, not to borrow a word from M. Taglioni, transmogrifications—we have hitherto not had reason to chronicle, although we knew it instinctively. Who can look at Carlotta's face and not at once own, that as many emotions can be expressed by its exquisite and varying play of features as evolutions by her small and twinkling feet. Perhaps of all the metamorphoses in the *Metamorphoses*, we prefer that of the "rustic coquette," which suits Carlotta's face and figure to the life. Shelley's simile of an "unbodied joy," can alone do justice in language, to this airy and inimitable assumption.

The ballet received a reinforcement on Saturday in the person of Marie Taglioni—no longer "little Marie," but "tall Marie," no longer pretty Marie, but "handsome Marie." Marie is now, indeed, as comely a lass as ever stirred up a fire in the heart of an enthusiastic youth. The first thing she ever danced in London—in 1847, when she was barely sixteen—was the *Pas de Rosières*, in her father's first London ballet of *Rosida*. Every one will remember how the then "little Marie" won the honours of the evening, even in the presence of another *débütante*, the accomplished Rosati. She did win them, and she wore them well, and she has kept public favour ever since, and is likely to keep what she has got, and add a great deal more to it. We have too often described the excellencies of Marie Taglioni to make it necessary that we should describe them now. Suffice it that she has gained additional *aplomb*, which, added to all the other commendable points of her execution, ensured the usual warm reception from her many admirers. The revolving step was the signal for the loudest plaudits, as of old.

On Tuesday Signor Lorenzo, the new baritone, made his debut, in Verdi's *suite de bruits*, in three acts, *Nino-Nabucco*. Of Signor Verdi's music we have only to say that we dislike it more than ever. Of the new singer we have a more agreeable impression. Signor Lorenzo de Montemerli has a tall and imposing figure, a good stage face, half hidden under a magnificent black beard, and a manly grace of deportment that at once placed him on good terms with the audience. He played Ninus, and looked every inch a king; indeed we doubt whether, from all we have read of him of Babylon, in Justin and other historiographs, the Assyrian unbeliever was of comelier

mould than Lorenzo de Montemerli. But in his gestures and his recitative voice, Signor Lorenzo occasionally recalls Tamburini—the young Tamburini—to our memory, so strongly that we frequently asked ourselves how it could be—since the *debutant* is seemingly a young man, and could not have had occasion (this being his first visit to England) to study the great actor and singer whom he at times so much resembles. As an actor Signor Lorenzo exhibits much that is to be admired amidst much that may be criticised. The general impression, however, is decidedly favourable. Signor Lorenzo exhibits a great deal of energy, and is by no means deficient in passion. He sometimes even approaches the highest impressiveness by means of action and look combined. Witness his attitude, and the vacant dismay stamped upon his physiognomy, when the crown is stricken from the head of Ninus in the obsequious *finale* to Act II. His passion was best shown in the dismal duo with Abigail, when the crown-smitten monarch is crushed under the heavy weight of his despair. His energy came out in the after scenes, where, having expiated his transgressions, he imagines to have conciliated the angry and circularly-revolving gods.* The voice of Signor Lorenzo is, we have pre-said, a baritone. Its tone is very pleasant and a certain softness is about it which delights the ear. In power, however, it is wanting, and eke in flexibility; but much of this may be laid to what a contemporary boldly styles “the nervousness incident to a first appearance.” We shall look with confidence to future progress. Meanwhile Signor Lorenzo was received with high favour, was recalled several times (“à maintes reprises”) during the evening, and his success was unquestionable.

The proud and perverse Abigail (how is it that *femmes de chambre*, in after times, came to be familiarly styled Abigails?) was impetuously personated by Madame Parodi, who in more than one of the scenes displayed a vigour and dramatic intensity which, if they do not ultimately make her a great tragic lyrist, ought. Madame Giuliani was the soft Fenena and was encored in the air of the ultimate scene. Who has forgotten that it was in this part Corbari made her first appearance in London, at Her Majesty's Theatre, in the season of 1846, Balfe's first year of conductorship? Who has forgotten that it was in this air Corbari obtained her first applause, her first encore? The “best of *seconde donne*,” as the *Athenæum* styles her—the “Queen of *seconde donne*,” as the *Times* calls her—the “most charming of *seconde donne*,” as every body called her, and as we called her ourselves, until, at Dublin, we saw her play the heroine of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, as we never saw it played before, and heard her sing the music, as we never heard it sung before (we make no exceptions), which caused us to acknowledge in her one of the most accomplished of *prime donne*, second no longer—the “best of *seconde donne*,” the “Queen of *seconde donne*,” the “most charming of *seconde donne*,” was then in her eighteenth year,† and inspired the audience with that delightful feeling which youth and beauty and great promise combined have never failed to create in civilised minds. Mad. Giuliani was not precisely Amalia Corbari, but she was a very good Fenena, nevertheless, and gave general satisfaction.

Her Majesty and Prince Albert were present on this occasion, and headed a list of aristocracy and fashion that made the theatre look unusually brilliant.

The Queen remained for the *ballot*, and as well as Prince Albert, appeared heartily to enjoy the acting and dancing of

the incomparable Carlotta Grisi, who, if possible, was more *spirituelle* agile, graceful and enchanting, than before.

On Thursday, an extra night, *Ernani* was given for the first appearance of Mr. Sims Reeves, an event of no ordinary interest, the house was exceedingly full, and there was evidently great curiosity and strong feeling excited to witness the *rentrée* of the celebrated English tenor on the stage of Her Majesty's Theatre, from which he had so suddenly and unaccountably vanished last season, after making his *début* in *Linda di Chamouni*. Why Mr. Sims Reeves quitted Her Majesty's Theatre, we do not exactly know; and knowing, perhaps, we should not tell, since the public has nothing to do with the matter. It will be much more interesting to our readers to read of the unquestionable success achieved by our popular countryman.

The reception accorded to Mr. Sims Reeves was enthusiastic. Hands clapped, hats and kerchiefs waved, and throats vociferated. Every species of active demonstration was evidenced in favour of our “own dramatic tenor,” who continued bowing his acknowledgments for several minutes. Nothing could be more unanimously boisterous, nor could anything more plainly exhibit the position in which Mr. Sims Reeves stands before the London public.

If Mr. Sims Reeves chose *Ernani* for his re-appearance, we can hardly compliment him on the choice. We think he might have found some opera more abounding in *tune*, and in which the fine quality of his voice would have a wider opportunity of display.

If, on the other hand, he aimed at exhibiting his dramatic powers rather than the excellence of his singing, he could hardly have selected a part more favourably adapted for that purpose—for which, however, he has Victor Hugo and not Verdi to thank. Be this as it may, Mr. Sims Reeves produced an extraordinary sensation in *Ernani*. He was in great voice, and sang with unusual energy and dramatic feeling. His first cavatina, “Come rugiada al cespite,” was rendered with intense expression, and brought down the loudest applause. In the *cabaletta* he managed the *pianos* and *fortes* with the best effect. The delicacy and purity of his singing in the duet, “Ah! morir potessi adesso,” (with Elvira,) evoked a unanimous encore, maugre the absence of all kind of merit in the composition. In the two “grand” *finales* to the first and second acts, Mr. Sims Reeves displayed all that breadth of style, power of voice, and manly vigour, for which he has been celebrated. The audience, pleased beyond measure, applauded to the echo, and recalled the singer vociferously. The greatest hit, however, during the performance was in the last scene, where the composer has given a sentimental passage, à la Bellini, to the tenor, followed by an important and noisy trio, the whole concluding with an elaborated death scene. Mr. Sims Reeves acted and sang with decided power in this scene, thus finishing a very excellent performance with a climax which set the seal upon it and confirmed the singer's triumph beyond all doubt.

Thus an important event in the season terminated most prosperously. Mr. Lumley has now no reason to complain of his strength in the tenor department. With Gardoni the graceful, Calzolari the flexible, and Sims Reeves the energetic, he will be able to satisfy the most exacting *habitués* of stalls and boxes.

Mlle. Parodi's Elvira was full of good points, although an unequal performance. In the first air, “*Ernani involarmi*,” she exhibited a great deal fire and more clearness in the upper notes than usual. In the last trio she was highly dramatic and earnest and obtained a round of hearty applause.

* Vide some of the Greek philosophers.
† Corbari is at present in her 22nd year.—Ed. M. W.

at the point when she throws herself into the arms of the devoted Ernani. We scarcely admired, however, her rush upon the stage at the commencement of this lively trio. It was overdone.

Sig. Lorenzo was Carlo, and again looked every inch a king, and when in the catacombs he appears an emperor elect—he looked every inch an emperor. Some of his recitatives were delivered with great emphasis, but he did not make so much effect in the air in the catacombs (the only one allotted to Carlo) as we anticipated. His voice sounds more powerful in declamation than in singing. We remember that this air (although transposed—a matter of very small consequence to Verdi's music, by the way) was the great effect when Albani played the part at the Royal Italian Opera, and even Superché in 1847 made an impression in it. Sig. Lorenzo, however, fully confirmed the favourable opinion derived from his first appearance, and will prove a decided acquisition to Mr. Lumley's troupe.

Belletti's Silva was as satisfactory as everything he attempts. His first air was encored. It is quite a treat to hear a singer so invariably correct, pains-taking, and efficient, as Signor Belletti.

The band went better than we could have supposed. See what it is to have a first rate conductor, like Balfe, always at his post and thoroughly accomplished! The advantage is incalculable. The chorus, both in Ernani and the other *suite de bruits* of Signor Verdi, is not strong enough for his peculiar style of instrumentation; but in the unison tune, "O sommo Carlo," which is quite out of keeping with the words, the chorus followed the orchestra, and obtained an encore.

At the fall of the curtain, Madlle. Parodi, Signor Belletti, and Mr. Sims Reeves, came forward twice. A call being then raised for "Reeves," that gentleman reappeared alone, and was cheered for several seconds.

The *Metamorphoses* followed, and the usual enthusiasm was created by Carlotta Grisi's performance. Marie Taglioni again introduced her *Pas de Rosières*. The ballet is fast regaining the hold it was wont to exercise upon the *habitués* of Her Majesty's Theatre. The house is no longer half vacated at the conclusion of the opera, as during the Jenny Lind furore, but the very last of Carlotta's feats, where, in the costume of a *Mousquetaire*, she fights with Karl (M. Taglioni), finds boxes and stalls crowded with delighted spectators.

Next week being Passion Week the theatre will be closed. The week following, however, Madame Sontag makes her *rentrée*, as Norina in *Don Pasquale*.

To-night *Ernani* is repeated, and the new dancer, Madlle. Ferraris, makes her *début* in a *pas* between the acts. Being Saturday night, we suppose Mr. Lumley will cut out an act of the opera, to conciliate the views of the Lord Chamberlain, who, we hear, has been very particular of late. It would be a pity to cut so beautiful a ballet as *Les Metamorphoses* when the abundant superfluities of Signor Verdi's music so evidently court the pruning-knife. Let Balfe look to this if he values his reputation as a man of taste.

CARLOTTA GRISI.

THE success of this admirable *danseuse* in the new ballet of *Les Metamorphoses* has been so decided that the "great press" has unanimously accorded a second review of the performance. We republish a few of the notices.

(From the Morning Herald.)

"The new ballet was received upon its second performance with the loudest testimonies of approbation; and, indeed, it could not well be

otherwise, for Carlotta Grisi, in whom the interest is entirely lodged, is more than capable of sustaining the responsibilities thus devolving upon her. She dances supremely, and individualises the several characters which she assumes in this fantastic invention with an histrionic ability that places her high among the few who are entitled, *par excellence*, to be called artists."

(From the Morning Post.)

"Carlotta Grisi more than confirmed her high reputation and the addition which she had made to it on the first night. Her performance of the Sprite was in the purest taste of perfect comedy. It was a union of histrionic and saltatory art which was, perhaps, never before achieved in the same degree. Marie Taglioni was introduced for the first time this season. Her reception was enthusiastic, and she fully justified its warmth. She executed a *pas seul* of infinite complexity with consummate grace. She fairly sustained the honours of her name."

(From the Times.)

"The ballet, already attractive by the beauty and variety of its grouping, and the charming performance of Carlotta Grisi, is strengthened to an important degree by the accession of Marie Taglioni. As for Carlotta's dancing, nothing can surpass it as a combination of the highest Terpsichorean art with the most consummate power of histrionic interpretation. So completely is she mistress of the mechanical part of her profession, that the most elaborate movements have an air of thoughtlessness which gives them an irresistible charm. All corporeal difficulties being thus subdued, the intellect of the artist has free scope; and with that brilliant fancy and quick perception of character which belong to Carlotta Grisi, the variety of expression becomes boundless. The little *pas* which she executes as the rustic coquette is not a mere exhibition of joyous dancing, but a fine piece of acting, in which the attributes of the actual elf and the pretended villager are blended in accordance with a profound conception of the part."

(From the Examiner.)

"This ballet, in the execution of it, is charming. Carlotta Grisi never danced better. Every movement was full of grace, lightness, and expression. The *épiègle* of her face was admirably in keeping with the character of the Sprite, loving fun, but not mischievous; and her pantomime was of the highest order. Which of her many costumes became her best it would be hard to say."

Praise like this, from the accomplished pen of the critic who first anatomised the ballet, and to whom almost as much as to Mr. Lumley we owe the famous *Pas de Quatre* of 1845, cannot be over-estimated. Now that Perrot has terminated his labours at St. Petersburg, it is to be hoped he will pay us another visit, and compose another *Pas de Quatre*—for what four dancers we may state by and by.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

THE season commenced on Saturday with an *éclat* which, we confess, far surpassed our expectations. We had our misgivings respecting the success of *Der Freischütz* on the Italian stage and in the Italian language. We have been most agreeably disappointed. *Der Freischütz* opened the present season of the Royal Italian Opera as triumphantly as *Masaniello* did the past, and the directors have added to their list another splendid achievement. The success of Weber's opera on Saturday was decided and complete, and has been acknowledged by the entire press of London.

Much curiosity naturally prevailed to witness the performance of *Der Freischütz* at the Royal Italian Opera, and the doors were besieged at an early hour. The outside doors of the pit, which last year were invariably opened at seven, were kept closed on Saturday evening for full a quarter of an hour past that time, and great and loud were the murmurings consequent thereupon. The night was bitter cold, and it was not without good cause these complaints were made. If the directors do not provide a proper waiting place for the visitors to the pit by means of a piazza or an awning over the entrance, they are bound to open the outer doors as soon as possible, if they have any regard for the health and lives of the public.

It is no joke to see ladies, thinly clad, standing for half-an-hour in the open air, with the thermometer nearly down to freezing point. Some evening a shower of rain will send the visitors all home, and the pit of the Royal Italian Opera will be left to the renters and officials, who may enjoy a night's holiday, and witness the performance. A letter appeared in the *Times* of Monday, *apropos* of this question, which we have re-printed in another part of our columns. We trust the directors will have this remedied in time. The wet season is coming on, and it will be a very serious inconvenience if either no covering be provided at the pit entrance, or the doors be not opened much sooner.

Talking of the "renters," we never witnessed anything more disgraceful than their conduct on Saturday night. Seurvy butchers at a bull-bait would have behaved with more decency. If these persons—we cannot call them gentlemen—desire to bring the theatre into disrepute, they cannot have taken a more effectual means of obtaining their end. They are the only enemies to the establishment—the plague-spots on its success. But we must hasten to more agreeable matters.

The house was exceedingly full. Her Majesty, Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, and the Princess Royal, were in the royal box. We believe it was the first visit of the Prince and Princess to the Italian Opera. A numerous *suite* accompanied the royal party. A host of fashionables were also present, and the theatre presented a very brilliant and animated appearance.

M. Costa's entrance into the orchestra was the first event of the evening. It was signalled by an instantaneous and vehement cheer from every part of the house, which was kept up for a considerable time, and was followed by two more rounds of applause, if not so long, quite as energetic as the first.

The overture was encored in a perfect hurricane of plaudits. We never heard this magnificent composition performed in a more complete and masterly manner. The conductor and band achieved an immense triumph.

Of Weber's *chef-d'œuvre* it is unnecessary to speak to the readers of the *Musical World*, who must be fully acquainted with its grandeur, power, and sublimity. Nor is it needful, however pertinent it might seem on this occasion, to add a word about the genius of the composer. These are recognised wherever music is known. Our immediate business is with the production of *Der Freischütz* at Covent Garden. To ascertain how much has been effected in the production, we must cast a glance at the best performances which have been given in this country.

The first performance of *Der Freischütz* in England took place at the English Opera House, in 1824, with Miss Stevens, Miss Povey, and Mr. Braham. The other characters are undeserving of notice. Braham was immense in Max, and Miss Povey good in Annchen; but Miss Stevens was out of her line in Agatha. The band and chorus were tolerable.

In the same year, *Der Freischütz* was produced at Covent Garden, when Miss Paton made a great hit in Agatha, and Miss Love made a charming Annchen. Mr. Pearman was the Max, and Mr. Keeley Kilian. In both these casts, Caspar was played by Mr. Bennett, of whom tradition has left us no account.

Drury Lane produced the opera the same year as Covent Garden and the English Opera House. Miss Graddon, Miss Povey, Mr. T. Cooke, and Mr. C. Horn, sustained the chief characters.

Horn's Caspar found favour in the eyes of many; he had no voice, but made amends for the deficiency by gesture and

attitudes. He danced the famous drinking song with much spirit. It will be acknowledged that this was not a superior cast.

Dismissing a few more of these English performances, of small account, we come to the German Operas at Her Majesty's Theatre, commencing with 1832, when Madame de Meric played Agatha; Haitzinger, Max; and Pellegrini, Caspar. The tenor was splendid, but the great Italian *basso* did not add to his laurels by his representation of Caspar. The chorus was better than any that had previously been heard in London, and the opera had a great success.

In 1840 a new German company performed *Der Freischütz* at the St. James theatre with no great *éclat*.

The following year another German company appeared in the same opera at Drury Lane, when Madame Heinefetter, Herr Haitzinger, and Staudigl sustained the principal parts. This was, perhaps, the most complete performance yet submitted to a British audience. Madame Heinefetter was very effective in the heroine, and Staudigl achieved a triumphant success in Caspar. In 1842 a good company, drafted from the former, and filled up with new importations, gave *Der Freischütz* with excellent effect.

Of the German opera of last season at Drury Lane, the one great feature was the Caspar of Herr Formes, a performance which made amends for a thousand deficiencies. As we shall have much to say of Formes directly, it is enough to state here, that the Caspar of the great German *basso* transcended by many degrees all former Caspars, and produced a most powerful and lasting impression.

Admitting the general excellence of the German chorused singers, which has become a tradition in the history of *Der Freischütz*, and the individual excellence of many of the German vocalists, in reviewing the different casts above noticed, we do not hesitate to award the Covent Garden performance as the palm of superiority to all previous performances of the opera which have taken place in this country. The perfect completeness of the Covent Garden band cannot be questioned, while the merits of the chorus, if not equally remarkable, are equally undoubted. The German singers were better trained in the action of the scene, and were in fact, better actors. The Royal Italian Opera chorus, in regard to voices, are, we contend, superior to the Germans, more especially in the case of the females. They are also of greater numerical force.

With respect to the getting up of the opera, to its scenic details, to the *mise en scene*, to the dresses and appointments, and still more, to the management of the incantation scene, and all its rich variety of *diableries*, Covent Garden has made great advances on all former productions of *Der Freischütz*. The dispensing with explosions and parti-coloured fires, gun-powder and blue lights, is alone a sterling proof of a move in the right direction. Weber's music required no such noisy and flaming additions, and the management of the theatre is entitled to praise for the restoration of the poet's and composer's intention.

In alluding to the entire strength of the cast, we shall find a further superiority manifested in the Royal Italian Opera performances above all others. Every subordinate character is adequately filled, by which means the *ensemble* is rendered in the highest degree satisfactory and imposing. The single instance of a singer of such repute as M. Massol sustaining the small part of Kilian, is enough to show that nothing has been left undone to render entire justice to the music of *Der Freischütz*.

Of the principal singers we can speak in high terms of praise, with, perhaps, the exception of the tenor, who has not

reached our utmost expectations. Nevertheless, Signor Enrico Maralti, *alias* M. Merelt, is by no means an incompetent artist. If not a Braham or a Haitzinger, he is a meritorious vocalist, and in the present dearth of tenors is a useful member of the company, and can be turned to good account. The music of Max, or Giulio, as he is called in the Italian version, is too low for Signor Maralti, who has a high tenor voice, and this of course must militate, to a certain extent, against the effect of his singing. It is but just to state that an evident improvement was demonstrated in the second and third performances of this singer.

Madame Castellan's Agatha is interesting in every respect. She looks the character to the life, and sings and acts with real sentiment. On Saturday, the fair artist was not in her best voice. She appeared nervous—the music was new to her—and not being able to render it in her best style, she most unwisely had recourse to cadences and passages of embellishment, which sounded anything but agreeable in Weber. Madame Castellan, on Tuesday, had entirely recovered her voice, but did not dispense with her flourishes. Everybody, however, was pleased with Madame Castellan, who sang as well as ever we heard her, and acted with unusual spirit.

Mademoiselle Vera has made a decided hit at the Royal Italian Opera. Her Annchen is the best we have yet seen. Her voice is a *mezzo soprano* of a clear, ringing quality, perfectly in tune, and managed with admirable effect. The improvement made by Mademoiselle Vera since we heard her two seasons since at Her Majesty's Theatre is remarkable. Her timidity, which used so painfully to mar all her efforts, has disappeared, and given way to perfect self-possession. Her first air, "Vien un giovin" (*Kommt ein schlanker*), at once impressed the public in her favour. She sang it with charming ease and simplicity, and acted it, moreover, as well as she sang it. The song was encoored with much applause, being the only solo of the evening which received the compliment. Mademoiselle Vera's Parisian success has been confirmed—if we were in a punning mood, we should say *verified*—by the fiat of a British public. The fair artist will prove a great acquisition to the Royal Italian company. But Madlle Vera also requires to be told, very plainly, that Weber's music stands in no need of ornaments and alterations.

Herr Formes' Caspar is one of the grandest and most impressive performances we have ever witnessed. Off the Italian stage, we have seen nothing to approach it: on the Italian stage, we have seen nothing to surpass it. This is saying a great deal, but it is not saying a word too much. The Caspar of the drama is a splendid creation, which none but a singer of a high poetical temperament could understand and embody. What the poet created and the musician vitalised in magic sounds the art at has illustrated with almost supernatural power. The instant Formes enters upon the scene, he rivets attention. The assumed recklessness and gaiety of his deportment, in the first scene, while subject to observation; the internal workings of despair shown in his starts and broken actions, or in his eyes, fastened in the dust, when unnoticed; the jovial fits which flash up amid his sullen gloom and despondency, like lightning on a dark night, rendering the darkness more obscure; in short, every motion, attitude, and look, is instinct with vitality, and exhibits the consummate artist. All this is entirely apart from Formes' vocal efforts; and yet what a magnificent organ, and what splendid singing are combined in this artist. Harken to the deep thunder of his voice in the revenge song; hear the very spirit of boisterous hilarity infused into the drinking song; mark with what art he softens his voice into a demoniacal whisper, when he addresses Zamiel aside; how

cajoling and natural, by turns, are his tones, when speaking to Max, as he pours the poison into his ears, or wishes to impress him with friendly sympathy! The incantation scene, by Formes, is a magnificent display of histrionic and vocal skill. He makes several great points in this scene. His supplication to Zamiel to prolong his life is terribly real and full of humanity. Like a profound artist, Herr Formes so blends the human with the supernatural as to make his Caspar far more interesting than ever Caspar was made before. The death scene is finest of all. The workings of despair and revenge in the agonies of death were never portrayed with more earnestness and power. The convulsive manner of drawing his sword, supporting himself on it for an instant as nature gives way, then gathering redoubled energies, the rushing forward and defiance of Zamiel at his sword's point, and falling dead on his back, may be compared to the last scene of Kean, in *Richard the Third*, or of Macready, in *Macbeth*. Never was success more complete than that of Herr Formes on Saturday night. He was recalled after the first act, and received with enthusiastic demonstrations. He also appeared at the end, with Mesdames Castellan and Vera, and Signor Enrico Maralti.

We need hardly observe that M. Massol is the best Kilian we ever heard in *Der Freischütz*. He gave the inimitable song with the laughing chorus admirably, and was loudly applauded. Massol is an artist in every way. His costume is always appropriate and picturesque; and in the business of the stage he is a thorough adept. Massol exhibited a new accomplishment on Saturday night. In the waltz he danced with ease and grace.

Signors Rommi and Luigi Mei fill up the minor parts of Cuno and Ottakar as well as can be desired; and a Signor Gregorio as the Hermit (*query*,—is not this our old Drury Lane friend, Gregg?) is strong and effective.

Madlle. Cotti, as chief bridesmaid, sang the solos in the Bridesmaids' Chorus very neatly, and looked very interesting.

The Zamiel of M. Doering is striking and picturesque. The high shrill tone of voice in which he speaks is singular; but it has an unearthly effect, and is, consequently, more in unison with the feeling of the drama than the traditional O. Smith bass growl. M. Doering dressed the part of Zamiel on Saturday as the Wild Huntsman of the Black Forest, which may be seen in the national pictures, and superstition has handed down in German legends. The following day, as we learn, several English gentlemen called upon Mr. Gye, and represented to him the absurdity of M. Doering's costume; whereupon, despite of M. Doering's protestations, and Mr. Costa's faith in Mr. Doering's notion of the dress, the Wild Huntsman's exceedingly striking and picturesque attire was laid aside for a black Spanish cloak lined with scarlet, which made M. Doering look particularly like a huge vampire begot between a flamingo and a Russian bear. We cannot offer an opinion as to which is the correct costume; but this we do know, that one looks a reality, the other an absurdity. We should like much to learn the names of those gentlemen who had power sufficient to change the devil's apparel at Covent Garden. We are firmly convinced that M. Doering and Mr. Costa are right after all; if not, they ought to be.

The band was perfection from beginning to end. The soloists distinguished themselves eminently on their different instruments. Mr. Hill played the tenor obligato accompaniment to Annchen's song in E flat with faultless execution and the purest tone. Mr. Barret's oboe was no less admirable in Annchen's first song, in C. Nor must we forget Mr. Lazarus's clarinet in Max's grand scena, "Thro' the forest, thro' the

meadows," nor Mr. Ribas's flute on several occasions, wherein both artists distinguished themselves in a manner which elicited applause from all parts of the house. The band, we repeat, was perfection from beginning to end, nor did we ever hear them in greater force.

The chorus were better than ever. The ladies especially distinguished themselves. Nothing could be more perfect than the singing of the Bridesmaids' Chorus. The Hunters' Chorus was encored. It was a very fine vocal display.

The scenery was exceedingly striking and beautiful. The two forest scenes were perfect specimens of woodland, and the Wolf's Glen was a masterpiece of scenic painting and stage ingenuity. We have only two faults to find with the "getting up." We dislike any curtain drapery behind the proscenium when the stage represents an out-of-door scene; and we pray the Covent Garden authorities to put a man in their moon, if it were only for the sake of novelty. At present, like all stage moons—which, by the way, are eternally either full or crescent—the moon in the Wolf's Glen, although a very good moon, is like a well-cleaned brass plate on which the sun is shining. These are the only faults we have to find with the production of *Der Freischütz* at the Royal Italian Opera.

We have much more to say of the performance, but our notice has already extended itself to an unusual length. We must, therefore, postpone all further question and discussion until next week.

One thing, however, cannot be passed over, viz., the recitatives to which Hector Berlioz has adapted the sparkling dialogue. Never was task more ably accomplished, and never did one great composer imitate the manner of another with greater ingenuity and skill. Hector Berlioz has written the recitatives in the very spirit of Weber, and the effect is as if Weber himself had composed them. We find in them nothing incongruous or discrepant. They are in perfect harmony with the original music, and to all, but those acquainted with the opera, might pass for Weber's own writing. M. Berlioz deserves the highest praise for what he has achieved; he is entitled to no less praise for the modesty and inobtrusiveness with which he has fulfilled his task. He has evidently thought of nothing but Weber, and has never aimed at exhibiting, for one instant, his own way of thinking and original turn of mind. All has been effected with a deep reverence for, and an instinctive appreciation of, the genius of the composer.

Der Freischütz was repeated on Tuesday and Thursday, and will be given again this evening, it being the last performance before Easter.

WEBER.

(From the Times.)

A QUARTER of a century has nearly passed away since the death of Carl Maria Von Weber, on the 5th of June, 1826, before he had attained his 40th year, during his only visit to England, and scarcely two months after the triumph of his *Oberon* at Covent Garden Theatre. A sufficient period has consequently elapsed to test the solidity of his fame, and to insure a dispassionate consideration of his merits. Weber has triumphantly passed the ordeal, before which so many reputations have crumbled into dust. Time has failed to shake that popularity which, even during his life-time, had become European, and the keenest investigations of criticism have been unable to assign him a lower place than had already been awarded him among those who have best distinguished themselves in the conscientious exercise of their art. A new

generation has confirmed the verdict of its predecessor, and Weber is enshrined among the classics of music. His faults may now be spoken of as unreservedly as those high qualities which made him eminent. The want of universality alone denies him a place by the side of the greatest masters. Weber did not, like some musicians, approach with equal success, and illustrate with equal power, every established form in which genius can be made subservient to the ends of art. He wrote two symphonies for the orchestra, but these were unworthy association with the works he composed for the theatre. He produced a mass, equally unfit to bear the test of such companionship, but never attempted an oratorio, or anything for the church, of length and importance; while, with the exception of his pianoforte sonatas (four in number) and some smaller compositions for that instrument, his contributions to chamber music are not more likely to conduce to his ultimate fame. Wherever, therefore, in the dramatic works of Weber—upon which his name must rest—deficient construction or the evidence of labour are to be found, they must be attributed to the want of that facility which is rarely to be acquired without the studious and universal application that enables its possessor to bring all forms under his control, and to excel as much in one as in another. This was the secret of Mozart—this was the secret of Beethoven; but in Weber this was wanting. On the other hand, Weber's genius was essentially theatrical, and, indeed, in whatever he wrote the dramatic element is perpetually showing itself. Of a romantic turn of mind, overflowing with a sentiment which sometimes bordered on the morbid, he had no patience for those dry contrapuntal studies, about which, though he talked and wrote much, he actually knew little in comparison with many, his inferiors; nor had he the large grasp of genius which enabled Beethoven in a great measure to dispense with them. Moreover, Weber's attention was not always exclusively devoted to music. At one time he dabbled in painting. At another, he was so engrossed by lithography, that it became his sole occupation, and for a considerable period he neglected his musical studies altogether. Even when most eager in his favourite pursuit, like Hoffmann, his contemporary and rival, he was at once musician and reviewer, and spent almost as much energy in criticising the works of others as in the composition of his own, besides setting forth with great pains a number of theories and systems of harmony and counterpoint, which, one after the other, he abandoned as untenable. But worse than all, perhaps, when at Vienna in 1803, Weber availed himself of the advice and instructions of the most unfit counsellor in the world for one of his poetical temperament—the Abbé Vogler, (also the master of Meyerbeer) about whose musical superficiality those inclined to doubt may consult the opinion delivered by Mozart, in one of his witty and instructive letters. There are many, indeed, who think that, had Weber learnt composition under another and a more congenial master, he would have been another man. But, although Vogler, with his unintelligible systems, may have had a considerable influence on the early studies of Weber, he could not quench the splendour of his genius, nor prevent him from inventing a style of dramatic music which, besides its intrinsic merits, was entirely his own, and has since found numberless imitators, not one of whom, however, has approached, within a long distance, the illustrious original. The dawn of this new style was first discovered in the comic opera of *Abou Hassan*, and afterwards more glowingly exhibited in the well-known musical drama of *Preciosa*, the subject of which was borrowed from one of the novels of Cervantes; but it only reached its full meridian some years

later, in *Der Freischütz*, which was brought out at Berlin, on the 18th of June, 1821, with a success that very few operas have achieved, before or since. In this remarkable production, the genius of Weber is conspicuously eminent. The most salient characteristics of his style, and above all, his originality, and the dramatic force with which he painted scenes and emotions peculiarly German, are exemplified with vigorous truthfulness. The melodies, spontaneous and beautiful, are admirably fitted to the personages of the drama and the mysterious events that control them. The orchestra, employed with graphic power in strengthening and developing the incidents that mark the progress of the story, and the positions under which the various characters are placed, presents effects of combination and contrast which have no precedent in former works, and are as beautiful and appropriate as they are new. In short, the popular German tradition of the "Free Shooters," so charmingly embodied in the *Sprache und Geschichte* of Apel, was just the sort of thing to excite Weber's interest and attention. The manner in which his friend, Kind, had turned it into a lyrical drama, enchanted him, and he never set about the composition of an opera with such a happy conviction of success. How rapidly the fame of Weber spread over Germany, how his *Der Freischütz* was presented in every town and city with equal success—and how shortly after it acquired the same popularity in England, which subsequently led to an engagement to write the opera of *Oberon* for Covent-garden Theatre, is too well known to need recounting. Paris, as usual, was latest in the field. We pass over the disgraceful *rifacimento* which M. Castil Blaze had the bad taste to bring out at the Odéon, under the title of *Robin des Bois*; but it was not until 1843 that the real *Der Freischütz* of Weber was produced in Paris, at the Académie Royale de Musique, the spoken dialogue being turned into musical recitative by Hector Berlioz. Now that this celebrated work has been given at every theatre in Europe, large and small; now that it is as familiar to the world as Mozart's *Don Juan* itself, a new interest is created by its production on a stage to which it has hitherto been a stranger, and to which, few would have thought it could be effectively applied. An adaptation of *Der Freischütz*, with the recitatives of Berlioz, has been recently brought out at the Italian Opera, in Berlin, with complete success, and it is this version, we believe, which was represented on Saturday night, at the Royal Italian Opera

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE second concert took place on Monday. The programme was highly interesting:—

PART I.		
Sinfonia, Letter Q		Haydn.
Romance, "Que je suis!" and "Une fée, un bon ange" (Le Domino Noir), Madlle. Charton		Auber.
Introduction and Polonaise in A, violin, Mr. Blagrove		Mayseder.
Recit. "Non, non, fermons l'oreille," and Air, "A toi, j'ai recours" (Les Diamans de la Couronne), Madlle. Charton		Auber.
Overture, <i>Leonora</i>		Beethoven.
PART II.		
Sinfonia in A, No. 2		Mendelssohn Bartholdy.
Scena, "Stille noch diess Wuth-Verlangen" (Faust), Herr Formes		Spohr.
Concerto in C minor, Op. 37, pianoforte, Mr. Charles Salaman		Beethoven.
Aria, "O! wie will ich triumphieren" (Die Entführung aus dem Serail), Herr Formes		Mozart.
Overture in D		B. Romberg.
Conductor, Mr. Costa.		

Haydn's Symphony, Letter Q (in G major), must be known

to most of our readers. It is perhaps the best of all out of the Salaman set. The *allegro* is on a large scale, bold and energetic—the *adagio* one of the composer's most lovely inspirations—the *minuetto* and *trio* as usual—the *rondo* (a pastoral) perfect—perfect in conception and perfect in development. Never was contrapuntal learning more happily exercised on a happier theme. The symphony was finely executed. Mr. Costa took the minuet in the "good old time"—not too quick—whereby its true character was retained. The *adagio*, in which some delicate points for the wood instruments were beautifully played, was encored unanimously.

Madlle. Charton was warmly received, and sang the lovely air from the *Domino Noir* with unexceptionable taste. The charming *prima donna* was applauded as she deserved.

Mr. Blagrove was cheered by audience and orchestra on making his appearance. His playing was as perfect as mechanism could make it. The *Polonaise* of Mayseder is sorry music nevertheless.

Madlle. Charton's second song was as captivating as her first; music and singing being equally good. We hope soon to hear this clever singer again at the Philharmonic. She would do well on another occasion to sing one of Mozart's airs. "Vedrai carino," or "Voi che sapete," would admirably suit her voice.

The overpowering overture to *Leonora* was overpoweringly executed. It was not encored, however, which may be traced to the fact of its very frequent performance of late. With Weber's *Euryanthe*, the *Leonora* might reasonably be laid by for a while.

Of Mendelssohn's symphony, the gem of the concert, one of the greatest works of the master and of music, we cannot do better than quote the opinions of a writer in the *Times*, with which we fully agree.

"Mendelssohn's symphony in A," says our contemporary, "was spoken of at great length on the occasion of its performance at these concerts in 1848, after having been laid aside unnoticed for some years. Its reproduction gave so much satisfaction that it was played a second time during the same season by command of Her Majesty. This symphony, the property of the Philharmonic Society, was first performed about 16 years ago, under the direction of the composer, during his second visit to this country, but was not appreciated according to its merits. The critics of the day decided it to be the work of an able musician, and nothing more. This movement was found too long, that too short, another too intricate, and so on. Nor, on one or two subsequent occasions, did it make any great sensation, and when the third symphony, in A minor (the "Scotch symphony"), first executed under the direction of Mr. Sterndale Bennett, in 1841, obtained such universal favour, its predecessor was quite forgotten, and but for circumstances unnecessary to particularize, might have reposed in undisturbed tranquillity upon the shelves of the Philharmonic library. After the death of Mendelssohn, however, in 1847, all his compositions, whether in manuscript or in print, were eagerly sought after, and the symphony in A major was resuscitated. Its reception now was quite a different matter. All its beauties were appreciated; it was unanimously pronounced a masterpiece, and some went even so far as to say that it was a finer work than the symphony in A minor. The first, second, and fourth movements are certainly in no way inferior, but the *minuetto* (the only movement of the kind ever written by Mendelssohn), which might almost have appeared in one of the symphonies of Haydn or Mozart, cannot be compared to the exquisite *intermezzo* in F, which forms so striking a feature of the later work. The great charm

of the symphony in A is its freshness. It was written not many years after the overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and is full of the glowing fancy and dreamy reverie that give to that remarkable production its peculiar and enchanting character. These are eminently conspicuous in the first movement, an *allegro vivace*, in six-eight time. The next movement, an *andante con moto*, in E minor, has perhaps never been surpassed in its way by Mendelssohn, or any other composer. Its style is tender and passionate by turns; the melody, distributed among the various instruments with consummate knowledge of effect, flows on in one uninterrupted stream; the principal subject is supported by a continually moving bass, *staccato*, which imparts a certain mysterious character to the whole; this is only modified by the occurrence of the second theme, a *cantabile* of exceeding beauty, which affords relief to the gloom of what precedes and follows it. The *coda*, made up of broken fragments of the principal theme, closes the movement with impressive solemnity. The *finale*, in the *taranella* style (*Presto Saltarello*) is a characteristic movement, suggestive of the bustle and excitement of an Italian carnival, a subject often attempted, but never, we think, so thoroughly well accomplished. The command of all the contrivances of counterpoint displayed in this movement is prodigious; but this is employed as the means, not the end, and instead of wearying the attention, like a dry display of learning, it excites it from first to last by the extreme art with which it is made to heighten the effect, and vary, by delightful contrasts and dexterous combinations, the melodies which stand as principal themes. The execution of this symphony, distinguished alike for delicacy and force, was highly creditable to the band and its accomplished conductor. The whole work was received with the warmest enthusiasm, and the *andante* repeated by unanimous desire."

We have nothing to add to this except that when Mendelssohn conducted the symphony in A, he was accustomed to take the "*Allegro*" *vivace*, the "*Andante*" *con moto*, and the "*Saltarello*" *presto*. We hardly think that what is gained in accuracy makes up for what is lost in spirit by taking these movements, the first and last especially, slower than the indicated time.

Herr Formes sang the noble scena from *Faust* in splendid style, and the fine air of Mozart with infinite spirit. He was greatly applauded in both.

Mr. Salaman meant well when he put down the concerto in C minor for his *début* at the Philharmonic, and the directors meant well when they engaged Mr. Salaman to play; but we think both Mr. Salaman and the directors made a miscalculation. M. Salaman is a zealous pianist, but the Philharmonic Concerts and the concertos of Beethoven are, we say it with deference, somewhat above his calibre.

The fine overture of Romberg (Bernhard Romberg, brother of the well-known Andreas, played with great spirit, made a worthy conclusion to a very satisfactory concert.

How about novelties?

THE MUSICAL UNION.

Mr. ELLA began his sixth season on Tuesday, and began it well. He has wisely retained Willis's Rooms as his arena. Both for convenience of position—Mr. Ella's subscribers being for the most part aristocrats—and for the disposition of the room for sound, the *locale* is all that need be desired. Too small for a grand orchestra, it is precisely the thing for a quartet.

As the programme presented no novelty, we may briefly

dismiss the performance. The order of selection was as follows:—

Quintet, in E flat minor, Op. 92, piano, violin, viola, violoncello, and contra-basso	Hummel.
Quartet, in D, No. 7	Mozart.
Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 14	Mendelssohn.
Septet, in E flat, Op. 20, violin, viola, violoncello, clarinet, horn, bassoon, and contra-basso	Beethoven.

Executants.—First Violin, M. Sainton; Second Violin, M. Deloffre; Viola, Mr. Hill; Violoncello, Sig. Piatti; Contra-Basso, Mr. Howell; Clarinet, Mr. Lazarus; Bassoon, M. Baumann; Horn, Mr. Jarrett; and Pianoforte, Miss Kate Loder.

The only fault of this programme was, that the three large pieces were too much of a color. A later work of Beethoven would have better contrasted with the beautiful quartet of Mozart and the very clever quintet of Hummel. The quartet was finely played. M. Sainton is a perfect adept in this kind of music. Besides being a great mechanist, he has a large and open style, susceptible of the utmost variety of expression. His tone and phrasing in the slow movement were unimpeachable. We know of few more competent to hold the second violin than M. Deloffre, an artist who displays the elegance and neatness without the exaggeration of the French school. Hill and Piatti were perfect. The septet, of which the whole was played—two minuets, two slow movements, and all, except the repeats of the first *Allegro* and *Finale*—went to admiration. Sainton brought all his fire into requisition, and was energetic, tasteful, and brilliant by turns. In the trio to the second minuet, the violoncello of Piatti was heard to eminent advantage. In the first minuet, the difficult horn part, with its detached passages, was faultlessly rendered by Jarrett. Lazarus, Baumann, and Howell played like Lazarus, Baumann, and Howell—in other words, as well as the clarinet, bassoon, and double-bass parts in the septet could possibly be played by any artists whatever. It was altogether an admirable *ensemble*, and excited the warmest expressions of satisfaction.

Kate Loder played in her best style. Her execution of the brilliant passages in Hummel's quintet was neatness itself. In Mendelssohn's very original and beautiful *Andante* and *Rondo*,* she was remarkably energetic, and lost sight of none of the intended effects of contrast, of none of the *nuances* indispensable to produce the proper effect. In the *rondo* she gave the true modern *presto*, which, however, deprived her mechanism of none of its clearness and decision. She was much and deservedly applauded.

The performance, as usual, began at half-past three and finished a few minutes before five. Almost all the audience remained until the last note was played.

We understand that one hundred new members have joined the Musical Union this season. We are glad of it. Few institutions have done so much in promoting a taste for the highest order of chamber music and performance among the aristocratic and wealthy classes of society. The Musical Union was established by Mr. Ella, in 1845, and he has directed its affairs ever since with spirit and ability. We intend, when we have a little more space at command, to devote a portion of our columns to a consideration of its organisation and the influence it has exercised upon art and artists. The subject is well worthy attention.

Ernst and Sterndale Bennett are to play at the next meeting. Meanwhile, the question of when will Stephen Heller make his first public appearance in London? arrests us on every side. Mr. Ella can best afford the answer.

* The same which M. Billet introduced at his second concert in St. Martin's Hall.

LONDON WEDNESDAY CONCERTS.

(From an occasional Contributor.)

ONE more of the "Spring series" has taken place, with the disadvantage of not differing from its four predecessors. The selection was from *Fra Diavolo*. Mr. Land sang "Vainly, alas! vainly;" Miss Isaacs, "Oh, hour of joy," and "On yonder rock." Both were applauded. Mr. Sims Reeves gave the charming serenade, "Young Agnes, beauteous flower," so well, that it occurred to us Mr. Lumley might get up the opera of *Fra Diavolo* expressly for him, whereby he would be likely to please the public and fill his treasury. Mr. Sims Reeves would do well to propose this himself. We will back him. Miss Lanza acquitted herself with great credit, and obtained an encore in the well-known BALLAD, "Alice Gray," and substituted instead thereof "John Anderson, my jo." She would have been more prudent had she omitted Donizetti's popular song, "Il segreto," as it is not endurable with anything short of the spirit infused into it by Alboni, and singers like Alboni, who are nowhere to be found—singers of no less volume than beauty and flexibility of voice. Miss Lucombe obtained great applause in Weber's difficult Scene, "Ocean, thou mighty monster," and a composition of a very different character, "Little Jane of the Mill." The latter we have heard described as a "comic song." Mr. W. H. Drayton was well received, and encored in Balfe's BALLAD, "The Blighted Flower," and sang the fine scene, "Rage, thou angry Storm," (Benedict) exceedingly well. The band performed a symphony by Haydn, (letter R); the overtures to *Fra Diavolo*, *Italiana in Algieri*, and the *Crown Diamonds*; and also took a prominent part in Martin's chorus "Vadasi via di qua." For their performance in the pieces allotted to them in the programme they deserve the utmost credit, but their gratuitous services in the trio were neither acceptable nor commendable. If they forget the respect due to the public they ought not to be surprised that the public should cease to pay them any in return. The "joke" (if joke was intended) was much too practical to be pleasant, and was equally a slight to the directors and the audience.

Several pieces were given with effect by Mrs. Newton. Mr. T. Harper, and Mr. Richardson played solos respectively, on the trumpet and flute, in their best style, and Miss Woolf, (K. S. at the Royal Academy of Music) played a fantasia of Döhler in *Guillaume Tell*, so brilliantly that we wished to hear her on something better. Our wish was soon gratified, for the audience encored Miss Woolf, and Miss Woolf responded to the compliment by playing one of the beautiful *Lieder ohne Worte* of Mendelssohn (in A), which satisfied us much more. Miss Woolf is one of the most promising pupils of Mr. Cipriani Potter. Herr Anschütz conducted. The hall was well attended.

HERR MOLIQUE'S CHAMBER CONCEPTS.

THE second of these classical meetings took place at the Hanover Square Rooms, on Wednesday evening, in presence of a numerous and select audience of amateurs. The programme was quite equal in interest to the first. The selection was as follows:—

PART I.

Quartet, E minor, Op. 59, two violins, tenor, and violoncello, B. Molique, Master Carrodus (Pupil of Molique), Messrs. Mellon and Piatti
German Songs "Was hör' ich rauschen im Walde," and "Ach Betty deiner Augenstrahl," Madlle. Schloss
Adagio, Fugue and Bourrées for the violin
With pianoforte accompaniment by Messrs. Molique and W. S. Bennett.

Beethoven
Eckert and Lindblad.
S. Bach.
Molique.

Trio in B flat major, Op. 27, pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, Messrs. Bennett, Molique, and Piatti

PART II.

Three Melodies, book 2, violin and pianoforte, Allegretto, C minor—Andante, E flat—Vivace, C major—Messrs. Molique and Bennett
German Song, "Schifferlied," Madlle. Schloss
Quatuor Brilliant, B minor, Op. 61, two violins, tenor, and violoncello, Messrs. Molique, Carrodus, Mellon, and Piatti

Molique.
Molique.
Molique.
Spohr.

The E minor of Beethoven, one of the Razumoffsky set, was well played. Besides the admirable talent of the concert giver, and the unequalled violoncello playing of Signor Piatti, we had again to remark the rising ability of Mr. Carrodus (Molique's young pupil), and the clever tenor playing of Mr. Alfred Mellon.

The Bach selection was highly interesting. The pianoforte accompaniment to the fugue, added by Herr Molique, was worthy association with the music to which it was allied. The execution was all that could be desired on the part of both performers. Nothing can be more perfect than Mr. Sterndale Bennett's performance of Bach's music.

Of the trio in B flat major (the first of Molique's trios), we have formerly spoken as a masterly work, and the fine execution of Mr. Bennett, Signor Piatti, and the author, gave us no reason to change or modify our opinion. The intermingling of the *adagio* and *scherzo*—quite a new idea—is carried out with the happiest effect.

The three melodies, Book 2, are as charming as the three, Book 1, which were performed at the first concert. The *andante* in E flat, quite a gem in its way, was encored. The playing of Mr. Bennett and Herr Molique, equally poetical and finished, was calculated to give the most complete effect to these charming bagatelles.

Spohr's quartet, like the one in A introduced at the last concert, is chiefly serviceable as a means of displaying the capabilities of a brilliant performer on the violin, and of this Herr Molique took the best advantage, elegance of style and the neatest execution going hand-in-hand. We must confess, however, a decided preference for Spohr's *real* quartets, where every performer has an equal share of the work.

The German songs introduced by Madlle. Schloss, are all good of their kind, and were charmingly rendered by that excellent artist. Herr Molique was the accompanist, and showed himself a ready and able pianist. His own "Schifferlied," a flowing melody in E major, with a graceful accompaniment of arpeggios, beautifully carried through, was much the best of the songs.

The performances gave unanimous satisfaction, as was plainly manifested in the frequent and hearty applause bestowed upon the various pieces of the programme. The third and last concert is announced for Wednesday, the 3rd of April, when we hope to have the pleasure of hearing Madlle. Molique renew the success she so well achieved at the first.

MR. STERNDALÉ BENNETT'S CLASSICAL SOIREE'S.

THE last of these intellectual, and we are glad to say, fashionable, entertainments took place on Tuesday at the Hanover Square Rooms. There was a very crowded audience. The following was the programme.—

PART I.

Sonata, No. 2, in A major, Pianoforte and Violin, Mr.

W. S. Bennett and Herr Molique

The Moonlight Sonata (by desire), C sharp minor, Op.

27, Pianoforte, Mr. W. S. Bennett

Aria, "Parto se vuoi così," Miss Dolby

Selections from the "Lieder ohne Worte" (by desire),

Pianoforte, Mr. W. S. Bennett

Bach.
Beethoven.
Bach.
Mendelssohn.

PART II.

Sonata Duo, Op. 47 (dedicated to Kreutzer), Pianoforte and Violin, Mr. W. S. Bennett and Herr Molique. *Beethoven.*
 Lieder, "Vöglein, wohin so schnell!" and "Auf dem Wasser," Miss Dolby. *Moscheles and Mendelssohn.*
 Selections from Pianoforte Works, Pianoforte, Mr. W. S. Bennett. *W. S. Bennett.*

The duets of Bach and Beethoven were both admirably played. The former was a very interesting specimen of the master. Molique and Bennett are well matched. Both are great musicians, both ardent devotees of the really great music, and both accomplished executants. Mr. Bennett played the "Moonlight Sonata" (the C sharp minor, Op. 27) as we have rarely heard it played. His expression in the slow movement was equalled by his energetic brilliancy in the last. The selection from the *Lieder* (in E flat, A flat, and C major) was encored, and the three picturesque sketches—the "Lake," the "Millstream," and the "Fountain"—exquisitely played, delighted as much as ever.

Miss Dolby sang all her songs beautifully. That of Bach is elegant, but it is *not* by Bach. That of Moscheles is pretty; that of Mendelssohn (from Miss Dolby's album, in which it was written by Mendelssohn's own hand) is as lovely a thought as ever flowed from the abundant mind of the composer.

The third concert was equal in all respects to the two others.

M. BILLET'S CLASSICAL CONCERTS.

M. ALEXANDRE BILLET gave his second concert at St. Martin's Hall, last night, to an audience as numerous and attentive as at the first. The following admirable programme was performed:—

PART I.

Grand Sonata in A flat, Op. 39, pianoforte, M. Billet. *Weber.*
 Air (*Fall of Jericho*), "Non, non, non, ce n'est point un crime," Madlle. Shergold. *Mozart.*
 Allemande et Fugue in G minor (Suite de Pièces), pianoforte, M. Billet. *Scarlatti.*
 Duet, "May Bells," the Misses Cole. *Mendelssohn.*
 Sonata in A major (by desire), from Op. 3, pianoforte, M. Billet. *Pinto.*

PART II.

Duet, "Would that my Love," the Misses Cole. *Mendelssohn.*
 Fantasia in F sharp minor, dedicated to Moscheles (first time in public), pianoforte, M. Billet. *Mendelssohn.*
 Duet, "The Wandering Wind," the Misses Cole. *Loder.*
 Air Varié, in D, pianoforte and violoncello, Sig. Piatti and M. Billet. *Mendelssohn.*
 Pianoforte, M. Billet.—Pastoral in G. *Steibelt.*
 Etude in E. *Chopin.*
 Etude in G. *Moscheles.*
 Etude in G minor (by desire). *W. S. Bennett.*
 Conductor. Mr. Walter Cecil Macfarren.

The grand *morceau* was the *fantasia* of Mendelssohn; but we must reserve a detailed notice of the performance for our next number.

MR. R. HOFFMAN ANDREWS.

This young pianist is now settled at New York, where it appears he is acquiring fame and money. A local paper speaks in extravagant terms of his performance at a recent concert. We quote the article entire:—

"Mr. Richard Hoffman performed two solos, and a duet with Mr. Burke. The first solo, a *Fantasia* by Prudent, on airs from *Norma*, is remarkable only, as a composition, for the enormous difficulties which are crowded into the short space of five minutes. How Mr. Hoffmann could be at the trouble to bestow the pains necessary to get by rote so thankless a piece of mechanical work, we are at a loss to imagine; however, the labour, mental and physical, seems to him as nothing, for every-

thing in his art is instinctive to him. He played the piece superbly, and displayed an increasing force and vigour, which we were glad to observe. The second piece, the *Marche Marocaine*, was performed by him by desire. It hardly needed this sort of an apology, for the masterly way in which it was executed was ample apology for Mr. Hoffman's playing it, even after the composer, De Meyer. We confess that we were somewhat doubtful of his possessing the necessary force, but when we heard his first piece we were satisfied that the *Marche* would excite astonishment and delight in all present. He played it most brilliantly: the passages of power were thundered out with full De Meyer strength, and the light and delicate passages were beautifully distinct and fairy-like in their exquisite lightness. There was nothing obscure in Mr. Hoffmann's performance; the composer's intention was manifest throughout. This piece was loudly encored, and Mr. Hoffmann interpreted the wishes of the public by repeating the piece—an unusual course now-a-days. In our opinion, New York should feel proud in the exclusive possession of so admirable an artist as Mr. Hoffmann, and for our own sake we sincerely trust that he may long remain with us."

Extract the Yankee hyperbole from this, and quite enough remains to lead the friends of Mr. Andrews to entertain a lively notion of the real impression he produced.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

[As we entirely agree with the arguments of a clever and well-informed writer in a great morning paper, who is now discussing a topic of high importance in relation to this anomalously placed institution, we shall continue to re-produce the articles as they re-appear. The following was among the "leaders" on Wednesday.—Ed. M. W.]

In our recent remarks upon the Royal Academy we briefly described the false position which that society occupies in relation to the National Gallery. We now propose to treat the subject more in detail, and to inquire somewhat closely into the origin, progress, and present condition of an institution which, although charged with no public functions, and subject to no public control, is, from its connection with the state of the arts, an object of great public interest and importance. If this enquiry should lead our readers to conclusions somewhat hostile to the proceedings of the Royal Academy, and even to its very existence as a society fostered by the highest official patronage, that result must not be attributed to any enmity on our part, but rather to the imprudence of the Academy itself, which has usurped a national building designed for another purpose, and thereby provoked a discussion which may not improbably terminate fatally to the interests of monopoly. If a man, or a set of men, or indeed anything be found out of place, there is no avoiding the vulgar questions—"What does he here?" "Who is he?"

The Royal Academy was constituted on the 10th of December, 1768, under the patronage of George III. and the presidency of Reynolds, who, in return for the lustre which he lent to the society's birth, received a substantial reward in the shape of knighthood. The Academy itself was the offspring of an incurable dissension among the Society of Incorporated Artists, who were themselves but an offshoot from a larger body previously existing, and which in its turn had seceded from, or at best was but the development of, an older institution. Thus the spirits of discord and intrigue, which presided at the conception of the very idea of an Academy, nursed its wayward infancy, directed its fitful growth, and inaugurated its maturity. Their evil influence is to be seen in the rules which were originally framed for the government of the Academy, and have, with slight alteration, continued to govern it to the present day. By these the number of members was limited to forty, and that of associates eligible as members to twenty. Engravers were at first totally excluded, but subsequently admitted, to the number of six, to the rank of associates: all artists who chose to exhibit their

pictures at the Academy's annual exhibition were eligible as associates, but an absolute prohibition was placed upon their simultaneous exhibition of any other picture in any other society: the selection of works for exhibition was vested in the Council of the Academy, who assumed an absolute power of rejection, and the arrangement of the works received was in like manner intrusted solely to the Academicians themselves: the public were to be admitted to view the pictures upon payment of a shilling, which was demanded not as a right belonging to the Academy, but on the genuine aristocratic principle, and, as the phrase is, "to keep the place respectable."

Such were the regulations of an institution which was ostensibly designed for the noble purpose of raising the standard of British art; but which seems to have been directed chiefly to educating the artist in his profession, and to teaching the public duly to appreciate it; to fixing pictorial skill in an high social position, and to maintaining it there by the distribution of honours and the support of royalty. That these results have, in a great measure been attained, and that the Academy has so far answered the end of its foundation, cannot, we think, be denied; but this partial success is the slightest possible proof of its claim to be considered in the light of a public body, entitled to the support of Government, and to the money of the people. A society for the promotion of the arts is a very different thing from a society for the benefit of artists. There is no reason why the two objects should not be combined under favourable circumstances; but in such a combination the second must always give way to the first. Otherwise art will be starved and its professors enriched, the national taste will not be instructed or elevated, a general level of mediocrity will be preserved in which many will obtain a comfortable living and a few rise to social eminence, but above which, none will sustain a venturous flight upon the wings of genius—in short, an Academy will be produced with all its consequences, such as we find them now in the society called Royal. For, if the Academy is to be judged by its fruits, what judgment shall be pronounced? Before it arose there lived Hogarth, Wilson, Reynolds, Gainsborough, West, Bacon, Nollekens, Chambers, Stuart, Strange, Woollett, Earlom, and others. These flourished without external support, and by their own innate vigour; warmed not by the sunshine of a Court, but by the fire of their own genius. The rolls of the Academy may, perhaps, contain as many names of equal distinction; but how many quite as great as these, or greater, can be found who have since existed in independence of Academic distinction. If art, before the Academy, languished, for want of corporate honours and cumulative reputation; now, since these advantages have been obtained, art should appear to have grown with the Academic growth, and to have attained that full blown maturity to which the Academy has itself risen. But no one, we believe, can see these large dimensions in the straightened form of the modern muse.

It would not be safe to affirm that an Academy of some sort is not a useful, perhaps even a necessary instrument for promoting the study of true art. The experiment has not yet been tried. The Academy which has existed since 1768, whatever may have been the purpose of its Royal patron and founder, has not elevated the arts, but has simply produced a personal benefit to certain artists. It has not improved the public taste, but has merely ministered to the taste which it found. It has not placed the profession above the dictates of fashion and caprice, but rather, by bringing the professor into closer contact with the votaries of those tinsel deities, it has tended to produce in him a servile habit of imitation and an

artificial mode of expression. True, it has raised the artist in the social scale of his own country, but it has not begotten any heirs of the world's inheritance of fame.

Here then we pause to repeat the question—What right has the Royal Academy to a joint-possession of the National Gallery? That building was designed to receive such standard works of art as should be capable of serving as models for professional imitation, and as objects for general admiration. It was to enshrine a collection by which the national taste might gradually be educated to understand the language of genius in the painter's alphabet. It was to serve as the silent instructor of the youthful tyro, who, by constant familiarity with the highest models, might, even unconsciously to himself, be brought to avoid the meretricious examples of vicious schools. Such is the grand moral purpose of a national collection of pictures—such the noble design which seems to be, in part at least, abandoned, to favour a society which has failed to serve one useful public purpose. Instead of spacious galleries, where the public might receive instruction by viewing the works of the great masters, classed according to their age or style, we are condemned to the confusion of an auction room, in order that a rival establishment may exhibit its wares for money, and receive its shillings at the door. It is under these circumstances that we think our readers will be induced to ask the vulgar question—"What is the Royal Academy, and what does it in the National Gallery?"

[If our able contemporary were to turn his eyes to Hanover Square, he perhaps would find something to say about another Royal Academy, which might be equally pertinent and *apropos* we mean the Royal Academy of Music.—Ed.]

CATHERINE HAYES AT LIMERICK.

(From a Correspondent.)

MISS CATHERINE HAYES made her appearance on Monday (11th), as Amina, in *La Sonnambula*. Such a scene of excitement was never before witnessed in Limerick. For many days previous to the night of performance, tickets were selling at enormous prices, and were it not for the excellent arrangements of Messrs. Corbett and Son, speculators would have reaped a rich harvest, they having invariably refused to sell tickets, except to persons known to them.

It is now exactly four months since Miss Hayes made her first appearance in her native city. Since her return from the Continent, her many friends and admirers upon that occasion could not but feel gratified at the success of the gifted *cantatrice*, but that gratification was not without alloy, for Miss Hayes appeared to be labouring under physical debility, and many thought that the fatigue attendant upon over work was but the precursor of something worse. These too-anxious friends, however, were agreeably disappointed by her improved looks and energy on Monday night. Upon her appearance on the stage, Miss Hayes was received with bursts of enthusiasm. The house rose *en masse*, and for the space of ten or twelve minutes the fair singer had to keep almost prostrate before the audience, who still kept cheering, whilst the waving of hats must have proved highly beneficial to the venders of such necessary articles. At last silence ensued, and the business of the opera proceeded.

I really think that Catherine Hayes could not have given her opening recitative so exquisitely had she not been anxious to embody her acknowledgments to her enthusiastic audience, by a more than usual display of excellence. Greater feeling could not have been infused into the following familiar passage:—

"Cari compagni, e voi
Teneri amici, che alla gioia mia
Tanta parte prendete, oh come
Dolci scendon d'Amina al core
I canti che v'ispirà il vostro amore!"

And never, I am sure, did audience respond more willingly in their hearts:—

"Vivi felice! a questo
Il comun voto, o Amina."

Any detailed criticism upon Miss Hayes' singing and acting would be superfluous, but we may be allowed to particularise certain points, which commanded especial attention.

All the scene where she is discovered in the Count's chamber bore the impress of more than common talent—it was equally truthful and affecting. The points were delicately contrasted, and the transition from joy at sight of Elvino, to astonishment at his coldness, was effectively managed. The words—

"O mio dolor!
D'un pensiero, d'un accento
Rea son, nè il fui giammai,"

were delivered in accents that penetrated into every heart. Miss Hayes was repeatedly called forward at the conclusion of this act, and received the compliment of a shower of bouquets. Throughout the rest of the opera the incessant recalls and plaudits attested the delight of the audience. The final rondo, "Ah! non giunge," was twice encored, and upon each repetition Miss Hayes varied the air, introducing new caderzas and ornaments, concluding the last time with a shake which, commencing *sotto voce*, she sustained for a long time, increasing gradually in loudness, until she finally ended with the full power of her voice. She was repeatedly called upon the stage, which in a short time presented the picture of a flower-garden, so profusely were bouquets showered upon the gifted and amiable songstress.

The chorus and band were efficient. Mr. Travers, the tenor (Elvino), laboured under so severe a cold that an apology was made for him. Polonini, in Rudolpho, proved himself a most excellent singer and actor to boot.

After the opera Miss Poole delighted everybody by her *haute* and piquant acting in the *Daughter of the Regiment*. Miss Poole's voice is peculiarly sweet and rich, and her roll upon the drum would do credit to the most efficient drum-major in the service. Signor Menghis, as Sulpicio, was satisfactory.

Tuesday night's performance brought Miss Hayes out in a very different kind of opera—*Norma*—one of the strongholds of the admirable Grisi. To the surprise of the majority of the audience, who considered Miss Hayes, from her natural feelings and education, to be exclusively fitted for such characters as Amina, she proved herself scarcely less efficient in the deeply inspired priestess; and while she infused womanly tenderness into the character, she retained sufficient dignity not to lose sight of the proud and slighted druidess. Miss Hayes' *Norma* created a sensation even in Dublin, where the impressive acting of Grisi must be fresh in their recollection—no small tribute to our young and talented country-woman.

Signor Menghis took the part of Pollione at a few hours' warning. Mr. Travers' absence was again inevitable. It is about two years since this gentleman made his appearance in Limerick, when he was considered a fair tenor; it was therefore very unfortunate that he should be attacked with so severe a cold as to prevent his doing himself justice on the present occasion. Signor Menghis' voice is serviceable, since it serves either for tenor or baritone, being both or neither, or

half of each. He can easily sing A in his natural voice. Miss Poole, as Adelgisa, contrived to make herself a general favourite. Signor Polonini was very efficient in *Oroveso*. Altogether, the company was decidedly good, and the arrangements reflect credit upon the management.

Miss Hayes' numerous admirers in Limerick are determined upon presenting her with a testimony of respect for her virtues, and appreciation of her talents, in the shape of a service of plate. Already subscriptions to a large amount have been received. She left for Cork on Wednesday. T. D. S.

Limerick, March 15.

DRAMATIC INTELLIGENCE.

HAYMARKET.

DOUGLAS JERROLD's excellent comedy, *Time Works Wonders*, was revived on Wednesday night. It was originally produced at the Haymarket in 1846, and was then very strongly cast, including the names of W. Farren, Stuart, Charles Mathews, Strickland, Buckstone, Tilbury, Mrs. Glover, Miss Fortescue, Madame Vestris, Mrs. W. Clifford, and Mrs. Humby. Of these the present cast retains only Buckstone and Tilbury. Keeley plays Farren's original character; Webster, that of Charles Mathews; Miss P. Horton, that of Mrs. Glover (!); Mrs. Keeley, that of Madame Vestris; and Tilbury, that of poor Strickland. The last is the worst substitution in the piece, and Mr. Webster's all to nothing the best.

The comedy was well played on the whole, and was received with roars of laughter. The scene where Felix (Mr. Webster), in presence of his father, who does not know him, simulates the toothache to escape detection, was exceedingly amusing. Buckstone's Bantam is inimitable; but it is not an important part.

A new Grand Burlesque, by Brough Brothers, will be produced at Easter, with great magnificence.

ADELPHI.

A DRAMA, in two acts, by Mr. Douglas Jerrold, which was brought out at the Haymarket, some ten or twelve years ago, under the title of the *Mother*, was revived on Monday night at the Adelphi as the *Mother's Dream*. The leading purpose of the drama is to show the feelings of a young wife, who has given birth to a child during a period of temporary insanity, and has lost it before she has recovered her senses. She is made to believe that a gipsy child, who has attracted her notice, is the result of an illicit amour of her husband with a frail sister of the tribe, and a jealousy of a most peculiar nature is awakened. Under the influence of this passion she has a fit of somnambulism, and wanders into the gipsy tent, where she learns, from the lips of the dying chief, that the child is her own, and has been stolen by a gipsy, who has harboured a grudge against her husband's family. The bereaved mother is a character to bring out the pantomimic talent of Madame Celeste, who originally played it at the Haymarket, and who employs all her power of gesticulation to give it effect. A cunning villain of the tribe, commissioned to inspire the lady with jealousy, is played with finished astuteness by Mr. Wright, who stands in contrast with the ruder villain of the tribe, personated by Mr. O. Smith. The chieftain, a well-conceived character, who retains a poetical superstition amid his more prosaic brethren, is acted by Mr. Hughes, with a great deal of picturesque feeling, though without enough indication of old age.

Taken as a whole, the piece is well written, a pretty

anecdote being set forth with a pleasing background of gipsy life, but it is of a kind rather too simple to furnish the chief entertainment of an Adelphi audience.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Nancy, March 18.

Our Opera Comique very much improves on acquaintance. The troupe has been strengthened by two important additions, in the persons of Mons. Huré, possessing a bass voice of considerable compass, and Mons. Vincent, one of the best French tenors I have ever heard. In addition to this, they are both good actors. Halevy's *Val d'Andorre*, first introduced them to my notice, and stamped them as valuable acquisitions to our most fastidious director. Mons. Huré, who played the part of Jacques Sincère, sang the music with artistic precision; his low notes, which are round and mellow, were peculiarly effective. Mons. Vincent, as Lejoyeux, was excellent. I have seen the original, (having sent you an account of the first representation of this opera in Paris,) and also the admirable Chollet in London, and with the recollection of these, Mons. Vincent, whose voice has the freshness of youth, and whose bearing throughout is in every sense of the word *joyeux*, gave me the highest satisfaction. He was much and deservedly applauded. Georgette, the coquette, was charmingly impersonated by Madame Huré. She would, however, have made a delicious Rose de Mai, in which part her dramatic as well as vocal powers would have been called into action. Her singing manifested all that ease which was so remarkable in the *Ambassadrice*, and her execution of some of the difficult passages in the first *cavatina* was brilliant and finished. Madame Huré made her first appearance on the stage at this theatre, in *La Dame Blanche*; and, although *fêted* by all the aristocrats of the town, and having more teaching and *soirées* than she can well attend to, has declared her intention to resign at the end of the year, to the regret of all the frequenters of the theatre. *L'Ame en Peine*, an opera by Flotow, was played last night; and again Madame Huré, M. Vincent, and M. Huré shared the plaudits of a well-filled house. Tomorrow we have *Le Juif Errant*, with all its stage "effects," as the English playbills say. I cannot close this without repeating that the orchestra, conducted by M. Moulin, is in every respect admirable. T. E. B.

PROVINCIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

MUSIC AT BATH.

(From a Correspondent.)

M. JAGUES, a resident pianist in this city, of ability, deserves praise for his spirit and enterprise in giving a series of concerts that, diverging from the run of provincial attempts in matters of this kind, tend to elevate the taste and excite a relish for really genuine music. If left to ourselves, we would renounce every species of modern fantasia for one such a treat as that presented to us on Thursday week. Haydn's famous quartett, op. 78, in B flat, and the beautiful trio of Mozart's in E flat, were played in excellent style by De Kontski (1st violin), Jaques (2nd violin), Mellon (tenor), and Hausmann (violinello). It would be ungenerous to particularise the merits of one where all had an equal share in the difficulties, but we cannot refrain from expressing our satisfaction at seeing a player like De Kontski throwing aside extravagance, and lending his energies to that school which alone makes, and alone proves the artist, and distinguishes him from the mere charlatan.

M. JAGUES played the *adagio* and *rondo solo* movement of Haydn's Sonata, Op. 70, and fully sustained the opinion entertained of him as a pianist of no ordinary calibre. In the G minor piano quartett of Mozart he was equally successful. Mr. and Mrs. Millar

added to the other attractive features of the concert by their vocal talents, and Hausman and De Kontski gave solos on their respective instruments. To M. Jaques we desire to pay our tribute of respect for an attempt to raise the musical taste of our fair city, and we trust that, having experienced a hearty response to his praiseworthy efforts, he will be stimulated to repeat them.—F. N. E.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THE OLD CHANTS.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

DEAR SIR,—I have perused with great attention Dr. Gauntlett's letter of the 20th of February, published in your No. of the 23rd ult., wherein he endeavours to maintain that the greatest masters of the musical art stand indebted to the Gregorian Chants for the subject music of their finest works; and I regret to say I cannot for a moment admit either the clearness or the correctness of the view he has taken of the subject. That the Gregorian Chants are exceedingly simple in construction, seldom if ever extend beyond a fifth in compass, and proceed in the march of their melodies by diatonic intervals of the simplest kind, are facts that no one will deny; and that the subjects of many of the choral and instrumental fugues of Handel, Mendelssohn, &c., are in like manner comprised within a range of about a fifth, and move also by simple diatonic intervals, is equally beyond doubt; but to assert that this similarity proves an *intentional* adherence to, or even a recognition of the Gregorian Chants, on the part of the wonderful men above named, is preposterous. There are many grounds on which a musician would make frequent use of a simple subject for a fugal composition. In the first place, there is the natural charm arising from its very artlessness; in the second place, a subject of such a nature would offer endless facilities for ingenious and varied treatment; and, lastly, a *canto fermo* would the most readily admit of the introduction of a florid counter-subject when adopted as the ground-work of a composition of great extent and elaboration. (Witness the "Wretched Lover" and the "Horse and his Rider," choruses of Handel). It is on these grounds, and on these *solely*, that I believe Handel, Mendelssohn, &c., to have selected very simple subjects for the earlier portion of some of their most gigantic inspirations.

And that there should exist some similarity between a series of simple intervals selected for the above purpose, and some Gregorian Chant, is the natural consequence of simplicity being observed in both cases. It is an *unavoidable* circumstance, that all simple subjects, comprised within an interval of a fifth, and moving by simple diatonic intervals, *must* bear some sort of likeness to the simple church chants, just as the two side lines of a triangle *must* approach nearer to each other in proportion as they draw towards the point. But before the simple and massive subjects of Handel can correctly be said to be extracted from the Gregorian Chants, simplicity herself must be dethroned, and her place usurped by the older chants. At present, the two classes of musical themes are nearly hand in hand, only because of their both being all but at the point of simplicity. It is simplicity that is the "foundation of all melody, form, and structure;" *not* Gregorianism.

The Doctor has cited no one instance where a simple subject of Handel, Mendelssohn, &c., is *identically* the same as a Gregorian Chant. All that he has hitherto said amounts to this: that they are like the Gregorian Chants, only different. Indeed, in his second letter, to force a similarity between one of Mendelssohn's simplest subjects ("He, watching over Israel"), and the fifth Gregorian Chant, he finds it necessary *simply* (!) to cut the subject in half, and turn the latter portion topsy-turvy before the likeness can exist. Now, with all deference to the Doctor, I cannot forbear observing that the system of torturing a subject, so that it may serve a particular end, might suit the views of the *Christian Remembrancer* or the *Ecclesiologist* very well; but will, I think, fail to deceive the intelligent readers of the *Musical World*.

To meet the Doctor, however, on his own ground. In the very chorus of Mendelssohn he has instanced, "He, watching over Israel," occurs a second subject, to the words, "Shouldst thou walking in grief," and which is to be found on page 193, first score,

last bar but one, of Ewer's vocal score. Now this second subject is not simply "like," but is absolutely *the same* as the opening one of the first movement of Dr. Boyce's anthem "By the waters of Babylon." Hummel has also made use of the same subject for the "Cum Sancto Spiritu" (in C minor) of his second mass. Again, Mendelssohn has employed as the opening of the second subject of the slow movement of the divine A minor symphony, a series of chords that are identical with the "ritornels" in Purcel's chorus, "Glory and worship" in his anthem, "O sing unto the Lord." And I could send you *volumes* of such parallel passages in the music of different authors. But what would they go to prove, dear Mr. Editor? that men whom the whole musical world have proclaimed to be men of genius, could not even invent their own subjects? Impossible. They would be merely so many *coincidences*. A composer has written what seemed best suited to his purpose; and it *chanced* to resemble something else—this is the whole fact of the matter. If accidental resemblances are to be quoted as wilful borrowings, then it must be said, that Mendelssohn mutilated a Gregorian chant and stuck the pieces together the wrong way, to get a first subject for his lovely chorus "He, watching over Israel," and took the second *in toto* from Boyce's anthem; a position to which very few of your readers will accede.

I will simply add, that however ingenious as a theory, the position to which this letter is a reply, cannot be received as a *fact* into our musical history. I have entered somewhat at length into this subject, because I am sure it is one that deeply interests a large body of your readers. Under these circumstances you will, I am sure, excuse the space this letter will occupy.—I remain, my dear sir, your constant reader and subscriber,

AN ORGANIST.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

SIR,—I trust I may be excused addressing you a few lines on the subject of the operas to be produced at the Royal Italian Opera this season. I am convinced that the announcement of such works as *Fidelio* and *Mosè in Egitto* will be received by the musical public with unmitigated satisfaction; but, sir, may I be allowed to ask why such works as the *Guido e Ginevra* and *La Juive* of Halevy (which, whatever may be their respective merits, are not adapted to the Italian stage), should be brought forward; whilst those glorious operas of the immortal Mozart, *Il Flauto Magico*, *La Clemenza de Tito*, *Così fan Tutti*, are left in the background? The taste of the day seems to be in favour of works adapted from the French stage; and so long as the result of that taste is to bring forward such works as the *Huguenots* or the *Prophète*, I see no cause of complaint; but surely, sir, with so many operas of Mozart and Rossini, some of which have never been performed in this country, and would, therefore, have the effect of new works, we need not be always looking to Halevy, or even Meyerbeer, for new operas. I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

A CONSTANT READER.

CONCERT AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

COURT CIRCULAR.

HER MAJESTY gave a concert on Thursday evening. The performance took place in the saloon, and the following was the programme:—

Overture (Melusine)	Mendelssohn.
Lied, "Die Schildwache," Herr Formes	Holz'l.
Andante, pianoforte, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, and horn, Mrs. Anderson, Messrs. Williams, Maloch, G. Waetzig, and P. Hardy	Beethoven.
Aria, "Weir ein Lieben hat gefunden," Herr Formes (Die Kntführung aus dem Serail)	Mozart.
Solo, Violin, M. Sauton, "Le Carnaval de Venise."	
Lied, "Der Krieger und sein Ross," Herr Formes	Holz'l.
Wedding March, (<i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>)	Mendelssohn.
Lied, "Die Wanderlust," Herr Formes	Easer.
Finale	Haydn.

At the pianoforte, Mrs. Anderson.

Her Majesty's private band was in attendance.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MACREADY.—Macrise has painted a noble picture of Macready in the character of "Werner."—*Literary Gazette*.

MADAME VERDAVAINNE gave "A Grand Soirée Musicale" at the Beethoven Rooms, on Friday evening. The audience was remarkable for its selectness as well as for its numerical considerations. The programme contained the names of a multitude of composers and artists. Madame Verdavainne is a pianist of considerable power, and performed compositions by Beethoven, Chopin, and Thalberg with great facility of execution. Madame Verdavainne's style is remarkable for its originality, though possibly this originality may not exactly be commended in every respect. The fair artiste was fortunate in the assistance of two of the greatest instrumentalists now living—Ernst and Piatti. The concert commenced with Beethoven's Grand Trio in B flat, by Mad. Verdavainne, Ernst, and Piatti. The Misses Williams sang with their usual talent, the "Io Pudia" of Donizetti—and also a very effective new duet by Holmes, called "Come away." We may venture to anticipate a successful career for this last production of Mr. Holmes, pen. It is pretty, sparkling, and perfectly natural. Miss E. Birch gave a graceful interpretation of Harper's ballad "Truth in absence." Mr. Sims Reeves sang the "Adelaide" of Beethoven in his best style, and was admirably accompanied by Mr. Brinley Richards on the piano-forte. Mr. H. Drayton introduced the well known air, "Piff, paff," from *Les Huguenots*. This gentleman possesses a voice of great depth and power. He also, with Miss Van Millenger, gave the duet "Senza tanti complimenti," by Donizetti. Ernst excited the wonder and admiration of every one by his exquisite performance of the "Elegie," and a romance by Heiler. His solos were very greatly and most justly applauded. Piatti gave the variations "Une Priere," written by himself, with that command of instrument and consummate expression which have placed him in the position of the best violoncellist of the age. Mr. Camus played a concerto on the flute, and a duet with Madame Verdavainne. Mr. Sims Reeves introduced a graceful ballad, "Tis bliss indeed to watch thy smile," which he sung with great expression. Mr. Brinley Richards conducted with his usual efficiency.

LITERARY KNIGHTS.—With a view to conciliate literature, and as a testimony to its growing importance, ministers, it is said, have decided on offering the honours (?) of knighthood, to Charles Dickens and Douglas Jerrold. Fancy Sir Charles Dickens and Sir Douglas Jerrold; how oddly it will sound. Whether, like Mr. Faraday, the great chemist, they will reject the offer, or like Sir Henry Ellis and Sir Roderick Murchison, will accept it, I have not heard. I suppose if there be any willingness on the part of our two humourists to accede to the stroke of the sword, it will be due to solicitations in certain fair quarters to which it is not necessary further to allude.—*Correspondent of the Bradford Observer*.

[What can this mean? Ed. M. W.]

ASTLEY'S.—Her Majesty has presented Mr. Batty, the proprietor of this theatre, with a pair of pure Arabian ponies, recently imported, whose first appearance in the arena is to take place as soon as their objections to the substitution of "sawdust" for "sand" have been reconciled, and their efforts to square the circle overcome.

TOM MOORE'S WIFE.—The Queen has bestowed a pension of £100 a-year on Mrs. Bessy Moore, wife of the celebrated poet, Thomas Moore. The pension, as the warrant sets forth, is granted "in consideration of the literary merits of her husband and his infirm state of health."—*Athenaeum*.

ALBONI has been singing at Marseilles and producing the same *furor* she did at Lyons. The local papers speak in the most rapturous terms of her performances.

COBBARI is, we understand, going with her sister to Moscow to sing in a series of concerts.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—The box occupied by her Majesty is the one formerly occupied by the late Queen Dowager—that is to say, one degree further from the stage than her box during previous seasons.—*Opera Box*.

OPERA COSTUME.—The proper dress for gentlemen who visit the Opera consists of a dress coat, plain black or white neckcloth, and black or white trousers; waistcoats are left to the fancy of the wearer. It may be added that, although white trousers are admitted, black are preferred.—*Ibid*.

A MANAGER IN DIFFICULTIES.—It is known that the celebrated violinist, M. Ole Bull, recently built, at his own cost, a theatre in his native town of Bergen, in Norway. Scarcely had the house been furnished when, so great was the love of art displayed by the townspeople, all the boxes and places were let. No arrangement was, however, made for the police, who it appears have a right to three of the first-class places in all theatres in Norway; they claimed their right, and M. Bull was unable to induce any of his subscribers to forego their seats; he, however, explained to the authorities his inability to grant the customary indulgence in the present season, but offered them three seats in the pit. They replied to this offer by a notification that on the next representation they should present themselves, accompanied by an armed force, and that if three first-class places were not vacant they should eject three of the visitors. M. Bull, irritated at this announcement, had three seats placed in the orchestra, above which he had a black board placed, on which was written in enormous white characters, "Places de M.M. de la police," and fixed at each end of the board a large lantern similar to that carried by the night patrol. The director of the police construed this proceeding into a grave offence against the authority of which he was the head, and acting on the law of 1887, M. Bull was arrested, and condemned to three months' imprisonment. Against this decree there is no appeal except to the king. It is not known whether M. Bull will avail himself of the resource.—*Observer.*

LONDON TAVERN.—A concert was given at this place, on Tuesday evening, in behalf of the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum. The attendance was very select, but not the less numerous for that. The vocalists were Misses Messent, Bassano, Lavenia, Purcell, and R. Isaacs; Mr. Whitworth; Signors Marchesi and Burdini; Messrs. Bodda and Sims Reeves. The instrumentalists were Messrs. Benedict, Osborne, Brinley Richards, M. de Kontski, Chatterton, and Richardson. Miss Messent sang, with success, a new ballad by Osborne, "Oh! Sing to me." Mdlle. Lavenia (who debuted on this occasion) possesses a voice of great compass and power, and considering the circumstances of a first appearance, sang with much success—well deserving the encore with which she was honoured. She is a pupil of Signor Garcia. Signor Marchesi (also a pupil of that master) gave a creditable version of "A tanto amor." The appearance of Mr. Sims Reeves was attended with the usual demonstrations of applause, and he sang, with his wanted energy and power, "the Death of Nelson," for which, on a demand for repetition, he substituted another well known ballad. Mr. Osborne played, with great effect, his *Nocturne*, "L'esperance," and his *Marche caractéristique*, and was admirably assisted by the accomplished Benedict, in the grand duet from *Les Huguenots*. Mr. Brinley Richards performed his brilliant variations on "Rule Britannia," and was honoured with very great applause. The violin solo by M. de Kontski, was a highly successful exhibition of skill. The fantasia consisted of subjects from the *Lucia*, involving passages of no ordinary difficulty for both piano and violin. The piano accompaniment was admirably sustained by Mr. B. S. Richards. In the second act, M. de Kontski gave his adaptation of Meyerbeer's "Air de Grace," upon a violin with one string—the effect was remarkable. Mr. Richardson performed his well known variations on the "Swiss Boy" in his usually brilliant style; and Mr. Fred. Chatterton agreeably varied the programme by his "Recollections of Normandy" upon the harp. The programme contained many other compositions, and with the exception of the usual fault—too great length—the concert was very successful.

A REAL DANCING MASTER.—Marcel was a dancing master, and the first posture master of his day. He used to say that none but the English possessed dignity enough for dancing well. He was so wrapt up in the sublimity of his art that he would not pardon the least inelegance of posture. In his latter days he was in very reduced circumstances, and severely afflicted with the gout. A young lady, one of his pupils, got her father to obtain him a pension from the king, and she was deputed to present it to him. She ran up to his chair, her eyes sparkling with joy, and put it into his hand. He immediately threw it from him, and said, "Go and take it up, miss, and present it to me as I taught you." She burst into tears, and obeyed. "I consent to take it now, and thank you; but your elbow was not quite rounded enough."

MR. FOREST, THE AMERICAN ACTOR.—In the Pennsylvania Legislature, a memorial was presented from Edwin Forrest, tragedian, asking the legislature to annul his marriage contract. A bill was also read in place to effect the object, which was referred to the Judiciary Committee.—*New York Tribune.*

BLACKBURN.—The Distin Family, assisted by Miss Connor, a vocalist, and Mr. John Willy, pianist, gave a concert at the theatre on Tuesday evening, under the immediate patronage of Robert Hopwood, jun., Esq., to one of the most crowded audiences the house has ever contained. The fine performances of the Distins on their splendidly-toned instruments drew forth repeated plaudits from the listeners, and Miss Connor's singing won for her unqualified approbation.

MUSIC AT GLASGOW.—We have had a number of musical entertainments latterly—probably the genial spring gives a tone to those things—but, as a concert in the genuine acceptance of the term, we have had none comparable to that of the Philharmonic Society on Friday night. Unlike most amateur associations, the Philharmonic only attempted what they felt they could do, and the consequence was, that everything was done well. Gentlemen amateurs are not supposed to be the best performers, though the hypothesis is often found to be very incorrect, and in no instance, that we remember, more so than on Friday night. It is true they were assisted by "professionals;" but we should never dream of "hinting a doubt" that, had they been alone, they could have rendered the overtures, "La Gazza Ladra," "La Dame Blanche," and "Masaniello," with an effect such as to surprise those who do not calculate where true musical feeling and judgment rests. But the test of the band's training was Beethoven's pastoral symphony. But for the impossibility of describing music, we would endeavour to convey some idea of two solos performed by Mr. Julian Adams, one on the concertina, and one on the pianoforte. If our attention could be turned to its study, Mr. Adams' performance would be enough to tempt us. Of the fantasia, founded upon a waltz of Mozart's, it would be difficult to speak in exaggerated terms. From its construction, we should be inclined to think it an extemporaneous performance, but its parts were so closely connected as almost to do away with the idea. The vocalism of Mr. Henry Phillips was characterised by his wonted superiority, and the airs given by Miss Kenneth were remarkable for their truth and elegance of delivery. Under whatsoever leadership the Philharmonic Society has been brought to its present efficiency, we do not inquire. From his directing the concert, we presume it has been the task of Mr. Julian Adams, and if so, the service rendered to the musical public are of no small order.—*Daily Mail.*

LYNN, NORFOLK, March 20.—(From a Correspondent.)—A party of musical amateurs have been giving a series of Classical Chamber Concerts here to make known some of the standard works of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Mendelssohn, &c., which have been tolerably successful, the instrumental portion, if not elegantly, correctly given, and the vocal purely and attractively rendered by Mrs. H. Wallace. It took place on Saturday. There were several encores amongst them. Kücken's "Trab, trab," and Molique's "If o'er the boundless sky," a proof of the growing taste for good music. The preceding concert had some very singular compositions introduced under the head Classical Music, but they have disappeared from the forthcoming programme.—

ADVERTISEMENTS.

MISS BIRCH AND MISS ELIZA BIRCH

BEG to announce to their Friends and the Public that they have REMOVED to No. 20, HEREFORD STREET, Park Lane, where they will be happy to receive Pupils as usual.
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MADAME SONTAG;SIGNORI LABLACHE, BELLETTI, LORENZO,
CALZOLARI, SIMS REEVES;
MADLLE. PARODI;

AND

MADLLE. CARLOTTA GRISI, MADLLE. MARIE TAGLIONI,
AND MADLLE. AMALIA FERRARIS.

It is respectfully announced that a

GRAND ENTERTAINMENT

will take place on THURSDAY, APRIL 4th, 1850, when will be presented
DONIZETTI'S Opera,

DON PASQUALE.

Norina - - -	Madame SONTAG,
Ernesto - - -	Signor CALZOLARI,
Dr. Malatesta - - -	Signor BELLETTI,
AND	
Don Pasquale - - -	Signor LABLACHE.

After which,

A DIVERTISSEMENT.

in which Madlle. AMALIA FERRARIS will appear.

To be followed by a Selection from a FAVOURITE OPERA, combining
the talents of Madlle. PARODI, Signor LORENZO, and
SIMS REEVES.

To conclude with the admired new Grand Ballet by M. P. TAGLIONI.

LES METAMORPHOSES.

In which Mlle. CARLOTTA GRISI, Mlle. MARIE TAGLIONI,
MESDLES. ROSA, JULIENNE, LAMOURREUX, AUSUNDON, M. CHARLES,
and M. P. TAGLIONI, will appear.The Subscribers are respectfully informed, that in case they should
be desirous to attend this Extra Performance, they will have the option
of taking it in lieu of a Subscription Night.Applications for Boxes, Stalls, and Tickets, to be made at the Box-
Office of the Theatre, where Pit Tickets may be obtained as usual,
price 10s. 6d. each.

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On this occasion M. Billet will have the honour to introduce

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2. Elegy, on the Death of Prince Ferdinand of Prussia, in F
sharp minor (by desire) Dussek.
3. Study and Fugue in B minor Bach.
4. Study in G Cramer.
5. Study in E Hummel.
6. Prelude and Fugue in B minor Mendelssohn.
7. Sonata Duo, Pianoforte and Violoncello, in D major, with
Signor PIATTI Mozart.
8. Sonata, Violin and Pianoforte, with M. SAINTON Mendelssohn.
9. Sonata, Violin and Pianoforte, with M. SAINTON Haydn.

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M. SAINTON, and the celebrated Violoncelist, Signor PIATTI, have kindly
accorded their eminent services for the Third Concert.

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ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3rd, (EASTER WEEK,) will be
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